

## Gibraltar of the North



When we are comparing a place to the great Gibraltar, we expect somewhere overlooking the sea. Although the Grand Duchy is just as majestic without the sea, it has been called the Gibraltar of the North because of the commanding fortress that surrounds its boundaries. The fortress was of great strategic importance for the control of the Left Bank of the Rhine, the Low Countries, and the border area between France and Germany. Many occupiers have found it hard to enter the country because of the awkward border and those that had been able to added more fortresses.

Luxembourg's defenses were destroyed in 1867 after it was painstakingly built for nine centuries. A great warning was spread all over Europe when the walls were slowly being noticed and took its shape. Other nations were threatened that the country may be keeping something explosive behind the great walls.

By the end of the Renaissance, Luxembourg was already one of Europe's strongest fortifications, but it was the period of great construction in the 17th and 18th centuries that gave it its fearsome reputation. According to Balmoral International Group, its strategic location had been the reason why Luxembourg became caught up in Europe-wide conflicts between the major powers such as the Habsburg-Valois Wars, the War of the Reunions or the French Revolutionary Wars, and it underwent changes in ownership, sieges, and major alterations, as each new occupier—the Spanish, French, Austrians, and Prussians—made their own improvements and additions.

Perpetual neutrality was placed in Luxembourg, signaling the end of the city's use as a military reserve and in 1867, the Treaty of London required the Grand Duchy's fortress to be torn down. The remains of the fortress have become a tourist attraction until today. UNESCO has reviewed its potential and in 1994, the city's old quarter and the fortress were listed as one of the World Heritage Sites.

Today's life in Gibraltar remains cultured and grounded by the natural charm of a European nation. Many people have a job in the finance industry. Reports by Balmoral International Group Luxembourg show the great growth of the financial sector in the past ten years in the country. Tourism and industrialization also continue to grow and develop. Times have been much better now as the country has also been listed in the top ten richest countries in the world.